

Amendment to the Drawings

The attached Replacement Sheet of drawings includes a rotation of FIG. 5 from a vertical orientation to a horizontal orientation. In addition, the Replacement Sheet includes a new figure, i.e., FIG. 6.

FIG. 6 is a top view of a portion of the clamping member of FIG. 5 (further including a portion of the first component), in which, a leaf spring (10) having a flat part (16) extending between curved end 15 and curved end 18 for abutting against the sheet-like part of the first component over an area of the sheet-like part comprising two or more conducting areas (4), so that the two or more conducting areas (4) are pushed against the corresponding contact elements (7) of the second component. In addition, FIG. 6 illustrates wherein neighbouring conducting areas (4) in different arrays are pushed by the same spring member (10) against the corresponding contact elements (7). Furthermore, FIG. 6 illustrates conducting areas (4) in different arrays are located on substantial straight lines perpendicular with respect to the direction of the arrays, wherein a spring member (10) pushes all conducting areas (4) located on two neighbouring substantial straight lines against corresponding contact elements (7).

Attachments: Replacement Sheet
Annotated Sheet Showing Changes

REMARKS

By this amendment, the specification has been amended, in part, to correct for minor typographical errors and a description of new Fig. 6. The drawings have been amended to include new Fig. 6. Claims 1-16 have been amended. Claims 1-16 remain in the application. Support for the amendments to the claims can be found the specification and drawings. No new matter has been added. Reconsideration, and allowance of the application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 12 and 13 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants note the allowability of claims 12 and 13 with appreciation. By this amendment, claim 12 has been rewritten in independent form, including all of the limitations of base claim 1 and intervening claims 6 and 11. Accordingly, claim 12 is in prima facie condition for allowance. Claim 13, which depends from claim 12, is also in prima facie condition for allowance.

Information Disclosure Statement

The office action indicates that the listing of references in the PCT Search Report is not considered to be an information disclosure statement (IDS) complying with 37 CFR 1.98. Upon a review of the Image File History for the instant application, it is noted that an IDS in compliance with 37 CFR 1.98 was submitted to the USPTO on January 19, 2009. The IDS included copies of the foreign references from the Search Report. It is further noted that U.S. counterpart patents corresponding to the references of the PCT Search Report are cited by the examiner in the instant office action.

The Specification

The specification was objected to as not including section headings. Applicant respectfully declines to add headings as suggested by the Office Action, as they are not required in accordance with MPEP §608.01(a). Withdrawal of the objection to the specification is respectfully requested.

Objection to the Claims

Claims 3-14 stand objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c) as being in improper form because a multiple dependent claim can not depend from another multiple dependent claim. In addition, claims 3-14 submitted 3-9-08 were viewed as superseding claims submitted 8-1-06. Withdrawal of the objection to the claims is respectfully requested for at least the following reason. As presented herein, claims 3-14 have been rewritten to incorporate the amendments to claims submitted 8-1-06, per the preliminary amendment. The objection to claims 3-14 is now believed overcome.

The Drawings

The drawings stand objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a) because the drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Applicant respectfully traverses this objection for at least the following reasons.

With respect to claim 3, the claim, in part, states wherein the first component is provided with one selected from the group consisting of (i) more than 200 conducting areas (4) and (ii) more than 500 conducting areas (4). It is submitted that Figures 1 and 2 illustrate a representation of a number of conducting areas (4). In particular, the conducting areas (4) of Fig. 1 are within the elongated rectangular part 2, near edge 3, which are further illustrated by in Fig. 2 which shows a part of the display at an enlarged scale, as indicated in Fig. 1 with the rectangle II. Support can be found in the specification, at least on page 3, lines 1-5 and page 6, lines 27-32.

With respect to claim 4, the claim, in part, states wherein said contact surface of

the contact element (7) of the second component (6) is smaller than said conducting area (4) of the first component by one selected from the group consisting of (i) at least four times smaller, (ii) at least eight times smaller, and (iii) at least sixteen times smaller. It is submitted that Figures 2 and 3 illustrate a relative size of the conducting areas (4) and the corresponding contact elements (7), respectively. In addition, support can be found in the specification, at least on page 3, lines 6-8; and page 7, lines 21-28.

With respect to claims 8 and 9, claim 8, in part, states wherein neighbouring conducting areas (4) in different arrays are pushed by the same spring member (10) against the corresponding contact elements (7). Claim 9, in part, states wherein conducting areas (4) in different arrays are located on substantial straight lines perpendicular with respect to the direction of the arrays, wherein a spring member (10) of said clamping means (9) pushes all conducting areas (4) located on two neighbouring substantial straight lines against the corresponding contact elements (7). As presented herein, the drawings have been amended to include a new Fig. 6. Fig. 6 is a top view of a portion of the clamping member of Fig. 5 (further including a portion of the first component), in which, a leaf spring (10) having a flat part (16) extending between curved end 15 and curved end 18 for abutting against the sheet-like part of the first component over an area of the sheet-like part comprising two or more conducting areas (4), so that the two or more conducting areas (4) are pushed against the corresponding contact elements (7) of the second component. In addition, Fig. 6 illustrates wherein neighbouring conducting areas (4) in different arrays are pushed by the same spring member (10) against the corresponding contact elements (7). Furthermore, Fig. 6 illustrates conducting areas (4) in different arrays are located on substantial straight lines perpendicular with respect to the direction of the arrays, wherein a spring member (10) pushes all conducting areas (4) located on two neighbouring substantial straight lines against corresponding contact elements (7). Support for new Fig. 6 can be found in the specification at least on page 3, lines 28-31; page 4, lines 3-8 and 11-19; page 7, lines 15-18 and 21-28; page 8, lines 32-34; and page 9, lines 1-11 and 28-31.

Accordingly, the new Fig. 6 is supported by the original specification and Figures 1-5.

No new matter has been added.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are being submitted with this reply to Office Action. In view of the above, withdrawal of the objection to the drawings is respectfully requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 8 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In particular, the Office action indicates that “[i]n reference to Claim(s) 8 and 9, the structure is not shown and it is not clear how the spring influences the neighboring lines or neighboring conductive areas.” Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for at least the following reasons. By this amendment, the drawings have been amended to include a new Fig. 6, as discussed herein above, and as supported by the specification as originally filed. There are six arrays of conducting areas (4) which are oriented in a direction as illustrated by the double headed arrow. Substantial straight lines of conductive areas are perpendicular thereto, wherein each substantial straight line includes a conductive area (4) from each of the six arrays of conducting areas (4). In particular, Fig. 6 illustrates a first substantial straight line of conductive areas which is neighboring a second substantial straight line of conductive areas, wherein the neighboring substantial straight lines of conductive areas occur below the same flat portion (16) of a single spring member (10).

Accordingly, neighbouring conducting areas (4) (i.e., within a given substantial straight line) in different arrays (i.e., wherein the arrays are oriented perpendicular to the given substantial straight line) are pushed by the same spring member (10) against the corresponding contact elements (7). In addition, for the conducting areas (4) in different arrays located on substantial straight lines perpendicular with respect to the direction of the arrays, the spring member (10) pushes all conducting areas (4) located on the two

neighbouring substantial straight lines against corresponding contact elements (7). As indicated herein, support for Fig. 6 can be found in the specification at least on page 3, lines 28-31; page 4, lines 3-8 and 11-19; page 7, lines 15-18 and 21-28; page 8, lines 32-34; and page 9, lines 1-11 and 28-31. Accordingly, Fig. 6 is supported by the original specification and Figures 1-5. No new matter has been added.

In view of the above, withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, rejection of claims 8 and 9 is respectfully requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claim 1 recites a system for detachably connecting a first electronic component with a second electronic component (6), wherein a large number of signal lines of the first component are connected with corresponding signal lines of the second component (6), wherein a sheet-like part (2) of the first component is provided with a number of conducting areas (4) arranged in an array at the surface of the sheet-like part (2) near an edge (3) of said sheet-like part (2), wherein each of said conducting areas (4) is connected with a signal line of the first component, and wherein a part of the second component (6) is provided with a number of contact elements (7) arranged in an array at the surface of said part, wherein each of said contact elements (7) is connected with a signal line of the second component (6), wherein each contact element (7) has a contact surface for contacting one of said conducting areas (4) of the first component, and wherein the second component includes clamping means with a number of spring members (10) to push each of said conducting areas (4) of the first component against a corresponding contact element (7) of the second component (6), wherein each spring member (10) of said clamping means pushes more than one conducting area (4) with the corresponding contact element (7) against each other, in response to the first electronic component being connected to the second electronic component.

Support for the amendments to claim 1 (as well as for amendments to claim 15 and 16), can be found in the specification at least on page 3, lines 28-31; page 4, lines 3-8 and 11-19; page 8, lines 32-34; and page 9, lines 1-11 and 28-31, as originally filed.

Claims 1, 2 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Van Brunt, Jr. et al. (US 5,181,853; herein referred to as **D1**). With respect to claim 1, Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection for at least the following reasons.

The PTO provides in MPEP § 2131 that
"[t]o anticipate a claim, the reference must teach every element of the claim...."

Therefore, with respect to claim 1, to sustain this rejection the **D1** reference must contain all of the above claimed elements of the respective claims. However, contrary to the examiner's position that all elements are disclosed in the **D1** reference, the latter reference does not disclose a first and second electronic component that are detachably connected to each other "... wherein the second component includes *clamping means* with a number of *spring members* ... wherein each *spring member* ... pushes more than one conducting area with the corresponding contact element against each other, in response to the first electronic component being connected to the second electronic component" as is claimed in claim 1. Therefore, the rejection is not supported by the **D1** reference and should be withdrawn.

In contrast, reference **D1** discloses a pair of flexible circuit members 15 and 17 that each include an array of electrical contacts 19 (column 3, lines 61-63). Both arrays of electrical contacts are positioned through an opening 13 in a housing 11, wherein both arrays are brought into physical contact. Upon alignment of the arrays with respect to each other, a fluid-expandable bladder 23 is actuated to promote electrical continuity (column 3, line 66 through column 4, line 63). Thus, **D1** requires separate flexible circuit members 15 and 17 that have no capability for independently detachably connecting to each other, as required claim 1.

The present application at page 1, lines 15-21, explains "however, plugs with large numbers of electrical contacts are voluminous and difficult to handle by not skilled users. Furthermore, when making use of electric plugs, both components have to be provided with a rather voluminous part of the plug, and it may be desired that at least one of the mutual connectable and detachable components is small and/or inexpensive, for example when such component has a short lifetime and/or should be changed from time to time. In case the other component is reused several times, such component may have a more complicated and/or expensive connecting part."

The applicant respectfully submits that the pressurized bladder 23 of D1 is rather voluminous and, further, involves expensive and complicated hydraulic technology. In addition, the arrangement of **D1** fails to disclose a compact connector arrangement attached to a flexible cable of a pair of flexible cables, as disclosed in claim 1. The arrangement of **D1** also requires that a user manually insert two separate cable arrays into the connector separately. Thus, **D1** do not disclose the compact, self-contained solution of claim 1.

Accordingly, claim 1 is allowable and an early formal notice thereof is requested. Claim 2 depends from and further limits independent claim 1 and therefore is allowable as well. Accordingly, the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejection thereof has now been overcome.

By this amendment, claim 16 has been amended in a similar manner as with respect to the amendments to claim 1. Accordingly, claim 16 is believed allowable for at least the same reasons as those presented herein above with respect to overcoming the rejection of claim 1. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

On page 8, lines 8-9 of the January 9, 2009 Office Action, the following is stated: "4.2 Similarly, **D2** and **D3** disclose all features of claim 16." In this regard, applicant understands this statement to mean that claim 16 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

as being anticipated by li (US 4,824,391; herein referred to as **D2**) or Squires (EP 0 431 260; herein referred to as **D3**). With respect to claim 16, Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection for at least the following reasons.

The PTO provides in MPEP § 2131 that
"[t]o anticipate a claim, the reference must teach every element of the claim...."

Therefore, with respect to claim 16, to sustain this rejection the **D2** or **D3** references must contain all of the above claimed elements of the respective claims. However, contrary to the examiner's position that all elements are disclosed in the **D2** or **D3** references, the latter references do not disclose a method for detachably connecting a first electronic component with a second electronic component "... wherein the second component includes *clamping means* with a number of *spring members* ... wherein *each spring member* ... pushes *more than one* conducting area with the corresponding contact element against each other, in response to the first electronic component being connected to the second electronic component" as is claimed in claim 16. Therefore, the rejection is not supported by either of the **D2** or **D3** reference and should be withdrawn.

In contrast, reference **D2** discloses a two piece connector for connecting a pair of flat flexible circuit members. The two piece connector includes a base 16 and a clip 14 that are slidably engaged. Separately, a pair of flat flexible circuit members are arranged facing each other so that their conducting areas are overlapping. The overlapping flexible circuit members are then inserted against the base of the connector so that the clip may be advanced over the circuit members to provide secure electrical continuity. This arrangement is shown in **D2** in Figs. 4 and 5 and described in column 6, line 59 through column 7, line 52. Thus, **D2** fails to disclose the method of claim 16.

In further contrast, reference **D3** discloses a discrete connector for placing two separate conducting cables into contact. The arrangement of **D3** discloses pivoting or rotating member 61 and 165 which engage a base 31 or 131. Between these two components, a pair of flexible cables 13 and 15 are located, wherein their electrical

conductors are aligned and the connector is closed to provide pressure and ensure electrical continuity. This arrangement is disclosed in **D3** at Figs. 1 and 5 and the abstract. Thus, **D3** fails to disclose the method of independent claim 16.

Accordingly, claim 16 is allowable and an early formal notice thereof is requested. Accordingly, the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejection thereof has now been overcome. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 5, 15 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by li (US 4,824,391; herein referred to as **D2**). With respect to claim 1, Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection for at least the following reasons.

The PTO provides in MPEP § 2131 that
"[t]o anticipate a claim, the reference must teach every element of the claim...."

Therefore, with respect to claim 1, to sustain this rejection the **D2** reference must contain all of the above claimed elements of the respective claims. However, contrary to the examiner's position that all elements are disclosed in the **D2** reference, the latter reference does not disclose a first and second electronic component that are detachably connected to each other "... wherein the second component includes *clamping means* with a number of *spring members* ... wherein each *spring member* ... pushes more than one conducting area with the corresponding contact element against each other, in response to the first electronic component being connected to the second electronic component" as is claimed in claim 1. Therefore, the rejection is not supported by the **D2** reference and should be withdrawn.

In contrast, reference **D2** discloses a two piece connector for connecting a pair of flat flexible circuit members. The two piece connector includes a base 16 and a clip 14 that are slidably engaged. Separately, a pair of flat flexible circuit members are arranged facing each other so that their conducting areas are overlapping. The overlapping flexible circuit members are then inserted against the base of the connector

so that the clip may be advanced over the circuit members to provide secure electrical continuity. This arrangement is shown in **D2** in Figs. 4 and 5 and described in column 6, line 59 through column 7, line 52. Thus, **D2** fails to disclose the arrangement of claim 1.

Accordingly, claim 1 is allowable and an early formal notice thereof is requested. Claims 2 and 5 depend from and further limit independent claim 1 and therefore are allowable as well. Accordingly, the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejection thereof has now been overcome.

By this amendment, claims 15 and 16 have been amended in a similar manner as with respect to the amendments to claim 1. Accordingly, claims 15 and 16 are believed allowable for at least the same reasons as those presented herein above with respect to overcoming the rejection of claim 1. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over **D2** in view of **Kato** (U.S. 6,062,873; herein referred to as **kk**). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection for at least the following reason. Claims 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11 and 14 depend from and further limit independent claim 1, in a patentable sense, and therefore are allowable as well. The 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection thereof has now been overcome. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

On page 11, lines 9-14 of the January 9, 2009 Office Action, the following is stated: "5.1 Features of claims 2 and 3 are known from D1 and D3. 5.2 Features of claim 5 are known from D1, D2 and D3. 5.3 Features of claims 6 and 8-11 are known from D2. 5.4 Features described in claims 4, 7 and 14 are merely some of several straight forward possibilities from which the skilled person would select, in accordance with ... circumstances, without the exercise of inventive skill; in order to solve the

problem. As is best understood, this rejection is respectfully traversed for at least the following reason. Claims 2-11 and 14 depend from and further limit independent claim 1, in a patentable sense, and therefore are allowable as well. The 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection thereof has now been overcome. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Conclusion

Except as indicated herein, the claims were not amended in order to address issues of patentability and Applicants respectfully reserve all rights they may have under the Doctrine of Equivalents. Applicants furthermore reserve their right to reintroduce subject matter deleted herein at a later time during the prosecution of this application or a continuation application.

It is clear from all of the foregoing that independent claims 1, 12, 15 and 16 are in condition for allowance. Claims 2-11 and 14 depend from and further limit independent claim 1, and therefore are allowable as well. Claim 13 depends from and further limits independent claim 12, and is therefore allowable as well.

The amendments herein are fully supported by the original specification and drawings; therefore, no new matter is introduced. An early formal notice of allowance of claims 1-16 is requested.

Respectfully submitted,
/Michael J. Balconi-Lamica/
Michael J. Balconi-Lamica
Registration No. 34,291
for Frank Keegan, Reg. No. 50,145

Dated: 2009-03-06
Philips Intellectual Property & Standards
345 Scarborough Road
Briarcliff Manor, New York 10510
Telephone: 914-333-9669
Facsimile: 914-332-0615
File: NL040116US1

ATTACHMENTS
a-32658.237